Flight operations from Guwahati airport

*242. SHRI KUMAR DEEPAK DAS: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi (LGB) Airport, Borjhar at Guwahati is not up to the mark in operation of flights;

(b) the details of flights cancelled or delayed for low visibility due to fog, dust etc., in the last two years and total financial loss incurred, as such;

(c) what is the technical defect and when it would be rectified; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) The operation at Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi International (LGBI) Airport, Borjhar at Guwahati is maintained as per standards laid down by International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) and licensed by Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA).

(b) to (d) There has been no cancellation or delayed flight for low visibility due to fog, dust etc. at LGBI airport in the last two years except during the period between 04.03.2009 to 17.03.2009. Due to high terrain, the minimum visibility requirement for operations at LGBI airport is 1200 mtrs. Due to dust storms, the reported visibility was 900 mtrs. or below during this said period and 131 flights were cancelled on account of which Airports Authority of India (AAI) had to incur a financial loss of Rs. 31,59,553/-. There was no technical defect.

SHRI KUMAR DEEPAK DAS: Sir, Borjhar LGB Airport is one of the oldest airports of this country. It is situated in the heart of the North-East Region. Sir, the hon. Minister has stated in his reply that the LGB Airport, Borjhar at Guwahati is being maintained as per standards laid down by International Civil Aviation Organisation. There are no aircraft servicing facilities at the airport. There is no engineering hub at the Borjhar airport. There is no facility for overnight stay of aircraft at the airport. There is no morning flight and there is no evening flight from Delhi to Guwahati or from Guwahati to Delhi, which is very much needed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question, please.

SHRI KUMAR DEEPAK DAS: Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the systems at this airport would be upgraded and standards brought up so as to meet these needs.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, the question asked by the hon. Member is whether the airport meets international standards in terms of technical equipment and all. I can say the Guwahati Airport has all the facilities of an airport requiring ILS, good radar systems, night-landing facilities, and everything else, as has been mentioned, meets the standards laid down by the

International Civil Aviation Organization and is duly licensed by the DGCA. I think, to that extent, the question is whether flights are getting cancelled at the Guwahati Airport due to lack of equipment. The answer is, all equipments required for safe operation of flights even in lower visibility conditions up to 1200 metres are available. As you are aware, these are hilly terrains; we cannot operate flights in lower visibility conditions due to some technical issues. But all equipments for modern operations are in place. In fact, when you talked about flights, I would like to say for the interest of Members that Guwahati operates almost 100 scheduled flights a day.

SHRI KUMAR DEEPAK DAS: My second supplementary is this: There is no international flight operating from Guwahati. Although there was a flight from Guwahati to Bangkok, it has not been operative since. There is no CAT system in the airport of Borjhar. Will the Government take specific steps in regard to these facilities and international flight arrangements made from Borjhar Airport?

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, flights to any airport is purely the decision of the airline concerned. As for facilities at Guwahati Airport, it has been declared an international airport and has all the facilities like customs immigration. If any airlines choose to do so, whether they are domestic carriers or private carriers, or any international carriers, the Government has no reason not to allow such flights. I would like to state that these are depending on commercial judgement of airlines and we, as Government, can do very little in that. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: No interjections please. ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री अमीर आलम खान : माननीय सभापति जी, मैं आपके माध्यम से माननीय मंत्री जी से यह जानना चाहूंगा कि दिल्ली से मुम्बई, लखनऊ, चेन्नई, बैंग्लोर, हैदराबाद आदि जगहों पर जाने के लिए जहाज कम समय लेता है, लेकिन इन्हीं जगहों से दिल्ली आने के लिए ज्यादा समय लेता है। इसका क्या कारण है? ...(**व्यवधान**)... मान्यवर, मैं ...(**व्यवधान**)...

श्री सभापति : ठीक है, ठीक है, आप पूछ लीजिए ...(**व्यवधान**)...

श्री अमीर आलम खान : मान्यवर, मैं जनरल नॉलेज के लिए ही यह पूछ रहा हूं। यह सभी एमपीज़ से जुड़ा हुआ प्रश्न है।

दूसरा प्रश्न यह है कि दिल्ली में इन्दिरा गांधी एअरपोर्ट पर उतरने में जहाज बड़ा समय लेता है। मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहूंगा कि आपकी ओर से क्या कोई ऐसी व्यवस्था की जा रही है कि वहां पर जो ज्यादा ट्रैफिक है, उसकी उचित व्यवस्था हो सके और जहाज समय पर पहुंच सके? हम यहां से लखनऊ 50 मिनट में पहुंचते हैं, लेकिन वापस डेढ़ घंटे में आते हैं।

श्री सभापति : ठीक है, ठीक है।

श्री प्रफुल्ल पटेल : सर, इसके बारे में मैं क्या जवाब दूं, लाइट वे में मैं ×सर्फ I would say in lighter vein that कि कम पैसों में आपको ज्यादा हवाई यात्रा करने का मौका दिया जाता है। It is due to air traffic congestion in Delhi. Air traffic congestion in Delhi is certainly much more as compared to Lucknow. During peak hours, there is much more traffic movement. Even after landing, I know there is longer taxis time at Delhi Airport. But that will reduce when new terminal will open in April

2010, which is not very far away. You might have seen on the left-hand side a massive terminal of truly global standard, which is coming up. Once that is ready, all flights, both domestic and international, are expected to shift to that terminal. With new runway, the time taken for coming to the old terminal will automatically get reduced because the new terminal is between both the parallel runways.

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY: Mr. Chairman, Sir, my question is related to the North-East. It is a small question to the hon. Minister. Bagdogra Airport, of course, is an international airport apart from being a military airport. It is a gateway to Sikkim; it is a gateway to *; it is a gateway to West Bengal ..*(Interruptions)*..

SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: There is no *. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please use official terminology. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI MOINUL HASSAN: I have a point of order. ...*(Interruptions)*... This is the third time that my friend has raised this. ...*(Interruptions)*... Please drop this. ...*(Interruptions)*... This is intentional. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Chair has corrected it and there is no need for any...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI TARINI KANTA ROY: You correct your question. ...*(Interruptions)*... Do this. ..*(Interruptions)*..

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Chair has corrected the question. ...*(Interruptions)*... प्लीज़, आप बैठ जाइए ...(**व्यवधान**)...

SHRI MOINUL HASSAN: This is the third time. ..*(Interruptions)*..

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY: Sir, I will correct it ..*(Interruptions)*..

MR. CHAIRMAN: You please correct your question. ..*(Interruptions)*..

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY: I just said the queen of hills which will shortly be called *..*(Interruptions)*..

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. Please don't. ..*(Interruptions)*.. No speculative questions. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY: Okay. I don't talk about *. I am talking about a particular region. Sir, Bagdogra Airport is a gateway for Sikkim; it is a gateway for Bhutan and it is a gateway for Darjeeling. Is the hon. Minister aware — I am sure if he is not aware he will find out and reply if he wants to do it later — that the Airlines Operating Committee comprises of Air India, Jet, Kingfisher, Indigo, Spicejet and Deccan on 25th May have made a representation to the Airport Authority of India saying that the security area, which is a bottleneck, is almost a chicken-neck for a passenger? It takes about three hours for a single passenger to board at Bagdogra Airport. It has been a matter of concern. It has been raised by passengers; it has been raised by operating airlines. Is the Minister aware of the problems faced by passengers boarding

*Not recorded.

from Bagdogra Airport which covers a large geographical area? If the Minister is aware, would he make facilities available at Bagdogra Airport, which has a lot of traffic flowing in and which is spread over a large area?

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, I am not aware of the specific meeting that the hon. Member has mentioned. But, I visited the Bagdogra Airport a few months ago and I inspected all the facilities. Yes, what he is saying right. It is a busy airport. It needs more upgradation. I know it is the closest way for him to reach home also. But, the fact is that it is an airport where we have a big expansion plan. I would also have to discuss this issue with the Ministry of Defence because the airport is an Air Force airport. And, in most of these Defence airports, for expansion of the civil facilities, we need land from them. Talks are on. The moment we get the land, I am sure like many other important cities and airports which are coming up in bigger way, Bagdogra Airport expansion will also be taken up. The only issue is about the land. Once I sort it out with the Ministry of Defence, I am very confident that we will take up the expansion work.

SHRI KHEKIHO ZHIMOMI: Sir, the hon. Minister is a very knowledgeable Minister. But, it seems when the question of North-East comes, his information seems to have been exhausted. I would like to request him that he should have the same knowledge regarding North-East as he has about other parts of the country. Now, I would like to ask whether the Ministry is contemplating to extend the night landing facilities to Dimapur Airport or not since it is the only airport in the State.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, I am little pained to hear this comment that we have lesser concern or knowledge of airports in the North-East. I would certainly like to update the hon. Member that the night landing facilities in the North-Eastern region are available at Dimapur, Guwahati, Lilabari, Silchar, Jorhat, which is IAF, Agartala, Lengpui, Imphal and Dibrugarh. So, regarding your question about Dimapur, I think, probably, you do not have information. As I said, all airports, which I have mentioned, have night landing facilities. Operations may not be taking place for various reasons, like the airlines don't wish to operate at night, or other reasons are there. But, the fact is that these facilities are available.

High-tech product export promotion scheme

*243. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR:††
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has operationalised high-tech product export promotion scheme;

(b) if so, whether this move comes two years after the scheme was announced in April, 2007 in annual supplement to the foreign trade policy;

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††The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Tariq Anwar.